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Message Text

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41
ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 SS-15 L-02 SR-02 ORM-01

PRS-01 SCA-01 VO-03 NSC-05 NSCE-00 INR-07 INRE-00

CIAE-00 NSAE-00 DODE-00 FBIE-00 SY-05 INSE-00 CPR-01

/066 W
---------- 090228
O R 101120Z MAY 75
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3743
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL CHIENG MAI
CDR USSAG-NKP
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 3204

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, LA
SUBJ: REQUEST FOR POLITICAL ASYLUM BY LAO GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL

1. AT 0630 HOURS LOCAL TIME MAY 10 THE DIRECTOR AND DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF LAO NATIONAL DOCUMENTATION CENTER (NDC), THE LAO INTELLIGENCE SERVICE, BRIG. GENERAL KHAMHOU BOUSSARATH AND HIS DEPUTY COLONEL ARYA PHIMMASONE CALLED ON NARCOTICS ATTACHE AND POLITICAL OFFICER TO MAKE FORMAL REQUEST FOR POLITICAL ASYLUM IN U.S. THEY NOTED THEY INTEND TO REMAIN UNTIL LAST MINUTE, BUT THEY ARE SENDING THEIR FAMILIES (RESPECTIVELY SIX AND NINE CHILDREN, PLUS WIVES, TO BANGKOK FOR SAFEHAVEN.)

2. THEY ALSO REQUESTED THAT EMBOFFS ASSIST THEM IN CHANGING THEIR KIP ON HAND (APPROXIMATELY 13 MILLION) INTO DOLLARS. THEY SPECIFICALLY REQUESTED THAT THEY
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RECEIVE DOLLARS IN FORM OF CHECK WHICH CAN BE NEGOTIATED IN U.S.

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THE FURTHER ASKED FOR ASSISTANCE IN EITHER SELLING
GENERAL KHAMHOU'S PERSONAL VEHICLE OR GETTING IT ACROSS
BORDER INTO THAILAND. EMBOFFS PROMISED TO LOOK INTO
FIRST TWO QUESTIONS, BUT INFORMED KHAMHOU THAT
THE DISPOSITION OF HIS CAR AND OTHER MATERIAL POSSESSIONS
IS HIS OWN PROBLEM.

3. AS DEPARTMENT IS WELL AWARE BOTH OF THESE OFFICERS
HAVE WORKED CLOSELY WITH VARIOUS USG AGENCIES OVER MANY
YEARS. BESIDES WEARING NDC HATS, KHAMHOU AND ARYA HEAD
THE LAO EQUIVALENT OF DEA, THE GROUPE SPECIAL D'INVESTIN-
GATION. THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THEY WOULD FIGURE HIGH ON ANY
LIST OF PERSONS SLATED FOR RETRIBUTION IF PATHET LAO SHOULD
ASSUME CONTROL OF LAOS EVEN NON-VIOLENTLY. (THEY ARE BOTH
ON OUR KIP LIST.)

4. THEIR CASE HIGHLIGHTS THE FACT THAT INCREASING NUMBERS
OF LAO KIPS SOON WILL BE CALLING ON US FOR ASSISTANCE. WE
THEREFORE NEED ANSWERS ON URGENT BASIS TO FOLLOWING
QUESTIONS:
A) ARE WE AUTHORIZED TO GRANT POLITICAL ASYLUM TO PERSONS,
SUCH AS KHAMHOU/ARYA, WHO FEEL THEMSELVES TO BE IN IMMINENT
PERIL BEFORE THERE HAS BEEN A SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN
POLITICAL SITUATION?
B) IS USG AUTHORIZED TO MAKE EXCHANGE CONVERSIONS OF
KIP TO DOLLARS ON BEHALF OF KIPS? IS THERE A LIMIT ON
THE AMOUNT THAT WE SHOULD CHANGE PER PERSON?

5. WHILE WE DO NOT IMAGINE THAT MANY LAO KIPS WILL
CHOOSE TO GO TO U.S., GIVEN THEIR TRADITIONAL TIES, IN
MOST CASES, TO FRANCE, WE SHOULD HELP KIPS AT TIME WHEN
THEIR GOVERNMENT APPEARS TO THEM TO BE ON VERGE OF FALLING
HOWEVER "PEACEFULLY" TO PRO-COMMUNIST ELEMENTS. ALTHOUGH
VIENTIANE MAY NOT FALL AS DRAMATICALLY AS SAIGON
OR PHNOM PENH, WE BELIEVE WE HAVE RESPONSIBILITY TO
THOSE WITH WHOM WE HAVE WORKED FOR MANY YEARS AND WHO AS A
CONSEQUENCE MUST FLEE THEIR COUNTRY OR RISK THEIR LIVES.
CHAPMAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL ASYLUM
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 MAY 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975VIENTI03204
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750164-0968
From: VIENTIANE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750562/aaaacegz.tel
Line Count: 98
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <19 MAY 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <20 MAY 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

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US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REQUEST FOR POLITICAL ASYLUM BY LAO GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL
TAGS: PINT, LA, (KHAMHOU BOUSSARATH), (ARYA PHIMMASONE)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006